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effective numbers is the well known contralto song, "O Lord, Thou hast searched me out."

Music on the Lake. Nocturne. By Walter Macfarren.

A GRACEFUL and well written pianoforte piece, reminding us somewhat of the style of Chopin in the opening phrase. The first theme, in A minor, is well contrasted with a second subject, sung by the left hand, against a quaver accompaniment, and the change into A major has an extremely good effect. Such music as this is excellent practice for touch; and must assist in cultivating a refined taste, and preparing the student for works of greater pretension.

Original Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—In reply to the letter signed "Henry A. Walker," permit me to say that, having again looked through the *Appendix to the Hymnal Noted*, I find nearly eighty tunes which, I cannot but think, would be condemned by almost any church musician. Take, for example, the tune commonly sung to "O Paradise," (No. 317 in this collection), which is an air known as "Ere infancy's bud," from a French opera by Méhul; also No. 335, sung to "Brightly gleams our banner," a favourite air of Haydn's, which became popular under the title of "Hope told a flattering tale." Again, it can hardly be denied that the coarse vulgarity of the following melody is enough to drive any one with ears out of church.



The secularity of this, too, will be recognised by all:—



Admirers of Mendelssohn will be shocked to find a lovely phrase from the *Elijah* mutilated thus:—



The opening chorus from Weber's opera *Oberon*, is thus quoted:—



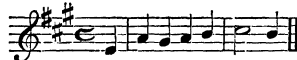
Here is a "melody of the eighth century," which, for comicality of rhythm, beats any of the humorous melodies of the present day:—

Melody of the 8th century.



A - men.

Whilst the first phrase of 176 is so strongly suggestive of "The British Grenadier," that we should strongly recommend it as a means of "playing people out of church."



I therefore submit that in a collection of little more than two hundred tunes, so large a per-centage of objectionable matter, is sufficient to warrant the observation Mr. Walker complains of. And I am sure you, Mr. Editor, and the musical public generally, will agree with me that too much care cannot be displayed in excluding from the Church and the Hymnal all tunes which, by their want of purity and vigour, are likely to have a pernicious influence on the minds of those who are unable to judge for themselves.

I also desire to say that nothing can be further from my intention than to speak disrespectfully of the Ritualists, many of whom I hold in the highest esteem; and I can assure Mr. Walker that only a strong sense of justice would weigh with me in condemning a book adopted by so earnest a body of workers in our Church. Yours, &c.,

THE WRITER OF THE NOTICE.

"MUSICAL PITCH."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

Dear Sir,—The interesting article by Mr. Lunn on the "Musical Pitch" in the February number of your periodical drew me into an agreeable cogitation, the substance of which I take the liberty to communicate.

I believe the average capability of the human voice is the same now as it was in the remotest periods of antiquity. And although we can have no data upon which scientifically to establish the fact, there is indubitable evidence relative to other physical conditions of human nature having remained stationary.

Taking as an illustration, our visual capabilities. Hipparchus (140 before Christ) refutes an assertion made by Aratus, "that there were only six stars visible in the constellation of the Pleiades." He (Hipparchus) says, "One star escaped the attention of Aratus; for when the eye is attentively fixed on the constellation, on a serene and moonless night, seven stars are visible."

Now the visual capabilities of the present day are precisely the same; some seeing only six, while others with stronger sight can see the seven. And as nature, in all her operations, reproduces herself with such unerring exactitude, doubtless our voices remain *precisely* the same as they were 2,000 or 3,000 years ago.

Relative to France taking the lead upon this subject, I consider it quite compatible with her nature. She has in many ways, for generations, been the pioneer, as it were, of all Europe. Burke, in one of his speeches on the French revolution, calls France "the nation that has been so long accustomed to give Europe the tone in arts and manners;" and Guizot, speaking of the political career of France, says, "It is the taste of my country to push, no matter at what cost, or in the face of what danger, into immense and unparalleled experiments. It is as though it held itself to be the great laboratory of the world's civilization." And Washington Irving says, "The French intellect is quick and active; it flashes its way into a subject with the rapidity of lightning, seizes upon remote conclusions with a sudden bound, and its deductions are almost intuitive. The English intellect is less rapid, but more persevering," &c.

We possess many qualities to be thankful for; and I trust the bond of universal brotherhood that assuredly exists in the musical world, will prevent any nationality obtruding itself into the subject; that we shall be content cheerfully to follow in their wake, as history shows we generally have done; and that a reduced uniform pitch may soon be established. I am, yours, &c.,

RICHARD ELGAR.

4, Snargate Street, Dover, Feb. 11, 1869.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—Might I ask you the favour to insert this and the enclosed letter, which I have received from Mdlle. Christine Nilsson, the eminent vocalist, in reply to a letter of mine, which I wrote to that lady upon "The English Musical Pitch?" Mdlle. Nilsson wrote her letter in French, but I have translated it into English for the benefit of your general readers.

I may here mention that I have received several letters from foreign vocalists, saying that the only reason why they do not care to sing in England is owing to the high pitch of orchestras. Mario, Tagliafico, and other well-known vocalists are all of the opinion that our pitch is ruinous to the voice. There cannot be the least doubt but that the forcing of the voice up to our present pitch is attended with the most disastrous results, and is the cause of the premature breaking up of many fine voices.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

CHARLES JAMES BISHENDEN.

Professor of Singing, and Author of "The Voice, and How to Use it."

52, Mortimer-street, Cavendish-square, W., Feb.

"2, Rue de Lisbonne, Paris, Feb. 1869.

"Sir,—Allow me to reply to one point in your highly flattering letter, viz., the lowering of the English musical pitch. The reform is judged most indispensable by all vocalists, and we consider it of the highest vocal necessity. If you succeed in your endeavours to lower the English pitch, you will well deserve the most profound gratitude of the whole profession. We think that the art will also owe you much, because in adopting the French pitch (*le diapason normal*) the two Italian opera-houses in London may be certain of a better execution of all their operas; besides, they will spare for their orchestras some sad and regrettable transpositions, which have, amongst others for the compositions, the inconvenience of destroying the vocal union of the operas. You can better than I judge of the great importance of this observation.

"In respect to myself, sir, I am ready to take any step, and willing to do anything, the effect of which may be the adoption of the French pitch in England. Accept, sir, the expression of my highest respects.

"CHRISTINE NILSSON.

"To Charles James Bishenden, Esq."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—As the originator of the correspondence about "Pointing," which has been continued in your paper since October last, I may, perhaps, be allowed a few words of review, now that the matter has apparently arrived at a conclusion between the two controversialists. It has been a war about small things, in which, I am sure, neither considers himself vanquished, and both hold the same ground with which they began the battle. Mr. Warman, at his first onset, seemed desirous of a sham-fight, in which no wounds should be given, nor malicious strokes permitted. Yet, I think he was the first to lose his self-control, and thereby to subject himself to the censure which he had passed upon his self-chosen antagonist.

Mr. Taylor would not have thought it necessary in the first place to trouble you with any reply to my criticism of his pamphlet, if he had not, by means of my letter, discovered a printer's error in the publication: and yet it cannot be said that the correction of that typographical mishap affected my arguments to any material degree.

When also Mr. Taylor took up the examples I had cited against him, and used them for a purpose entirely distinct from mine, he did not thereby refute my assertion.

Mr. Warman evidently enunciated Mr. Taylor's principle of the relation between music and words conversely: and it is not a little amusing to observe how the charge of unintelligible expression is cast to and fro from each at the other. Whether or no Mr. Taylor has ever edited a psalter, pointed according to his theory, I cannot say: but I feel confident that the attempt would involve him in such difficulties as in his writing he dare not hint at; and would enlarge his somewhat narrowed vision to a more liberal view of an intricate subject, which he ventures to confine within a very limited boundary. Possibly Mr. Taylor is acquainted with contemporary musical journals, and will allow me to recal to his mind the long discussions on "Pointing," which have appeared in them. One suggestion in particular, advanced some two or three years ago, was founded on a principle diametrically opposed to his—treating the chant form as a melody admitting of change both in time and rhythm; thus it was thought that the modern chant could be made a less faulty vehicle for conveying the emphasis of unrhythmical language. Mr. Taylor may also be acquainted with the "Free Chant," which sacrifices the melodic element altogether, that it may avoid false accent and gain a variation in sentiment.

Trusting that the correspondence has been interesting to others beside Mr. Taylor, Mr. Warman, and myself, I remain, Sir faithfully yours,

A. S. MARK'S MAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—I have twice taken occasion to reply to certain objections made to portions of my pamphlet on Pointing. Hitherto, no statements have been brought forward in disproof of what has been advanced by me.

Conceiving the object of a correspondence, such as the present, to be the elicitation of truth, and that object to be obtainable only by an orderly consideration of the arguments advanced on either side, it seems to me that nothing remains but again to refer Mr. Warman to my previous communications on the subject.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

February 23rd, 1869.

JOHN TAYLOR.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Violoncello.—We cannot recommend you a book, not knowing the amount of your progress on the instrument. When in town, apply at the Royal Academy of Music, Tenterden-street, Hanover-square.

Metro.—We cannot insert disparaging accounts of concerts, written by private individuals who are strangers to us.

J. W. L.—The editor of the work you name is dead; and we cannot give you any further information respecting it.

W. H. Hannaford.—Last month we merely received an announcement that our Correspondent had, "made arrangements" for a performance of the Messiah, and we are not even now furnished with any notice of the concert; indeed, we have no proof that the performance alluded to ever took place.

Italia.—We are unable to answer your questions.

MR. LANCASTER'S letter shall receive attention in our next.

The continuation of the "Incidents in the Life of Beethoven," will appear as soon as the pressure of other matter will permit.

Brief Summary of Country News.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for any opinions expressed in this Summary; as all the notices are either collated from the local papers, or supplied to us by occasional correspondents.

ALDERSHOT.—The third annual Concert, by the C. S. C. Choral Society, took place at Aldershot, on